

OLD STONER'S GIRL

How She Became a Happy Woman.

By HOWARD SHERIN.

The story properly begins at midnight on the San Luis Obispo coast, California, 20 years ago, when the September moonlight shone down upon Stoner's cattle ranch, near the Pacific ocean, in the rugged Santa Lucia mountains.

Stoner had been a Texas ranger and could hold his own extremely well in that rough frontier community. He had carried off a pretty Spanish wife from the Chihuahua region years before, had brought her to the rocky California coast and had purchased a settler's claim and an adobe house, built by a Spanish Hidalgo half-century ago.

Here he farmed, raised cattle on the unused government lands and kept a sort of hotel, for several mountain trails joined at that point the broad highway which led from the county seat, 20 miles south, to the northern settlements in the plineries. He had five daughters, too, the youngest, Theresa, known as Tessa, a girl of 17. That added to the attraction, and almost every night the dark eyed half Spanish girls sang and danced, and old Stoner managed to hear all the news that was afloat, and somehow most of the loose coin of the region ultimately found its way into his pockets. He was a deep one, that same Ephraim Stoner, quiet, sly and patient, secret in his methods and deadly in his blow.

Stoner's wife and his four eldest daughters were uneducated and in complete subjection to his will. But Tessa had more brains and energy than all the rest put together and quite as much beauty, and so the old Texan ranger took a certain pride in her and had even allowed her to attend a district school for two years.

This midnight when, as I have said, the story begins a person of a prying disposition might have discovered several interesting performances in progress around the Stoner adobe. On the north side of the house Tessa was leaning from her window conversing in low tones with a blond, fair haired and sturdy young man on horseback.

"Tom, do you know my father? He is not the careless, warm hearted man you may suppose. I must admire his ability, but that is all. I warn you, Tom, there never was a more dangerous man. He may be where he hears every word you say, though if he is he will not speak to you or me about it. But if he knew you cared for me he would be your enemy. He has other plans for me. He wants me to marry for money."

Tom Warren had once been the schoolteacher in the mountain district, miles away, where Tessa had been one of his pupils. Thrown upon his own resources from his childhood, he had developed a strong, earnest character and was already so popular in the county that he had just been elected sheriff, though the youngest man on the ticket.

While Tessa and her lover were talking a scene of a different nature was being enacted on the south side of the old adobe, which overlooked a deep ravine and a camp of five or six men in a field below. For several years these men had spent their summers there, ostensibly hunting, fishing and exploring the country with their dogs and guns. Every one knew them, and most persons liked them. Tessa did not.

Stoner, though it was midnight, sat in the moonlight on an old rawhide chair outside the door smoking his pipe and meditating—a tough, stoney, grizzled night owl of a man.

"That infernal knucklehead at the camp ought to have reported before now," he thought to himself as he smoked.

A man came out of the brush and spoke deferentially.

"Cap'n, good evening."

"You're late."

"Dick was shot."

"Well?"

"Just as the driver threw off the box. Shot by a passenger in the neck and shoulder."

"He mustn't stay here to get us into trouble. Take a boat and carry him to the point and leave him in the cave there."

"Yes, cap'n."

"How much aboard?"

"About \$2,000 for the Josephine miners."

"Send it over the cliff before morning, and I'll divide it up soon. But you be extra careful—that new sheriff is a smart one."

"All right, cap'n. And the man went back to camp."

A moment later, just as Stoner was going into the house, there was a low thud of horse's hoofs, and Tom Warren, the young sheriff, rode down the trail around the corner of the old adobe building into the country road that led to the west. He had at last yielded to Tessa's entreaties to "Go, go, this minute, Tom."

Impassive as Stoner was he felt a little startled by the sight.

"Where in the devil did you come from, sheriff? Anything up in this part of the country?"

"Oh, no, not a particle. I've been visiting my old school in the mountains and took the trail home down the coast."

Stoner's face was plausible enough, for there was a certain truth in what he said. The trail that entered the canyon at the angle of the house, leading the game little relieved, had been there since Stoner put up and stay with us the hardest day's game. Stoner; I must go down to date.

Stoner; I must go down to date.

Stoner; I must go down to date.

Stoner; I must go down to date.

Stoner; I must go down to date.

Stoner; I must go down to date.

Stoner; I must go down to date.

Stoner; I must go down to date.

Stoner; I must go down to date.

Stoner; I must go down to date.

Stoner; I must go down to date.

Stoner; I must go down to date.

Stoner; I must go down to date.

Stoner; I must go down to date.

Stoner; I must go down to date.

Stoner; I must go down to date.

Stoner; I must go down to date.

Stoner; I must go down to date.

Stoner; I must go down to date.

Kestral to see my friends there. It's only an hour's ride."

"That settles it," thought Stoner.

"Plenty of stout fellows to use as sheriff's deputies there. He has probably stumbled on traces and is going for help."

He sat and smoked and slipped his hand back under his coat. "Easy to shoot the fellow," he said to himself.

"Well, goodbye, Stoner," said Warren suddenly. "I suppose the beach road is as good as ever?"

"Perfectly safe, only when you cross Toro creek keep on the sand bar. It's as hard as iron. I crossed there today."

"Thank you. Adios."

Simple, smiling speech, those words of Stoner, and yet they were intended to send Warren to his death more surely and safely than by bullet of pistol or pellet of secret poison.

Stoner took an extra swig of brandy and went to his rest. Warren rode down the rugged hill to the bottom of the ravine, then turned seaward, and at last the wide gulch opened broadly to the shore of the Pacific.

The cliffs were from 50 to 300 feet high and full of wave worn caves. Warren drew rein on the beach and for fully ten minutes watched the ocean sway and rise. His thoughts thrilled with dreams of Tessa. He would take her away from her narrow and hurtful surroundings. He would force Stoner's consent, marry her and make her happy.

He rode rapidly south, and in half an hour the month of the Toro appeared in the midst of sand dunes, breakers rolling in and the steady river rolling out. Here was the long sand bar, ten feet wide and stretching across hardly an inch higher than the water surface.

Warren was beginning to have some suspicions of Stoner, but not such as to lead him to doubt the simple directions he had received. The sand bar looked safe, but within a few days the sea, as Stoner knew, had swept it mightily, torn out the long compacted mass and placed instead a quivering mass of quicksand so treacherous that not even a light footed rabbit could cross without being swallowed up and dragged bodily down. Warren rode swiftly forward. He had crossed sand bars hundreds of times. Some horses would have been wiser, but the animal he rode had been bred in the valley.

The approach to the bar was hard for a few rods, and he galloped on. Suddenly, in one heartbreaking, breathless descent, noiseless but unutterably dreadful, Tom Warren's horse went down, down, and the soft, sly sand came up to his mane. He shrieked out that ghastly cry of appeal and agony that a desperate, dying horse will sometimes utter.

Tom knew the peril. He had drawn his feet from the stirrups and lifted them up at the first downward throb, but the sand began to grab at him also. He threw himself flat on his breast and tore himself loose from the poor animal, over whose back the mingled sand and water were running, as it rolled from side to side in ineffectual struggles to escape.

Tom spread himself out over as much surface as possible, but slowly, resistlessly, the mighty force drew him downward. The hard beach was only ten feet distant, but practically the chasm was impassable. He felt his horse sink out of sight. The sand gripped his own knees and arms, his thighs and shoulders. Two inches more, and the end by suffocation was inevitable. Up to this time he had not shouted; only his horse's wild death scream had told of the tragedy. What was the use? Who would be passing along that lonely road? Then he thought of Tessa and of life. He raised his voice in a clear, strong shout for help, again and again repeated.

Far off along the deep ravine there came a cry in response and a horse's hurrying feet, and hope awoke in his heart. The margin of life was five minutes now—not longer. Faster, faster, oh, fearless rider!

"Tom, where are you?"

"Here, Tessa. Don't come too near."

But the mountain girl knew the danger. Creeping down stairs for a drink of water, she had heard her father's words to Warren, had thrown a shawl about her shoulders and run to the pasture. There she caught her pet horse, sprang upon his unsaddled back, seized a riata as she passed the stable and galloped at the utmost speed down the ravine, hoping against hope, for many minutes had necessarily elapsed since Warren started.

She sprang to the ground and tossed the rawhide rope to the one arm he held above the sand. She folded her shawl and put it over her horse's shoulders and tied the riata round like a collar. Then she led him slowly away from the quicksands, and Warren thought his arm would break, but gave up, reluctantly, painfully, the sand grew up its prey.

"Your father told me to take this road, Tessa," said the young sheriff.

"Yes, I know that, and I heard one of the men tell him today that the bar was swept out."

There was a long silence between them.

"Tessa, go with me to San Luis," said Warren. "And let us get married."

And Tessa went.

Old Stoner heard the news a few days later. Within an hour he had "retired from business." The camp was broken up, the hunters disappeared, mysterious lights flashed at intervals all night from the points of the cliff, and the next day old Stoner himself disappeared, leaving his family, the ranch and the live stock. It was said that he made the best of his way to Mexico and finally to South America. The world is large as yet, and men who have money can ramble over a good deal of it without finding a past they wish to escape from. But Tessa lives in her San Luis Obispo cottage, with orange-trees over it and La Marque roses on the porch, and she thinks herself the happiest woman in California.

MUTUAL BENEFIT LIFE INSURANCE CO.

OF NEWARK, N. J.

FREDERICK FRELINGHUYSEN, PRESIDENT.

ASSETS (Market Values) Jan. 1, 1904.....\$87,458,889 12
LIABILITIES.....80,748,046 91
SURPLUS.....6,710,842 21

Mutual Benefit Policies

CONTAIN

Special and Peculiar Advantages

Which are not combined in the policies of any other Company.

Stephen S. Day,

District Agent

776 Broad St., Newark.

THE BEST GRADES OF Beers, Wines and Liquor

can be purchased at

H. Snyder & Son's

BEER.

Peter Hauck's, Feigenspan's, Anhauser Buech, Bass Ale, Guinness Stout.

CHAMPAGNE.

Mumm's Extra dry, Werner's, Louis Durand, Imperial.

WHISKEY.

Mount Vernon, Monogram, Hunter, Wilson, Homestead.

BITTERS.

Angostura, Abbott & Co., Little's Bitters, Wermer's Bitters.

All Orders Promptly Delivered

H. Snyder & Son,

279 Glenwood Avenue,

Phone 83-B. BLOOMFIELD, N. J.

MASON AND LIGHTNING JARS

Jelly Glasses,

Jar Rubbers and Caps,

ICE CREAM SALT

Bushel and Peck Bags.

My Fancy Butter Cannot

Be Equalled at

25c and 23c.

I HAVE

Health Brand Coffee, 25c.

R. T. CADMUS,

595 Bloomfield Avenue

PHONE L. D. 683; Local 68.

Health! Rest! Recreation!

are assured under the most

favorable conditions at

Cambridge Springs,

PENNSYLVANIA.

midway between Chicago

and New York, on the

Erie Railroad.

You ought to know all about it

Erie booklet, "The Bethesda of the Middle West," on application to the Ticket Agent or

D. W. Cooke, General Passenger Agent, New York.

BLOOMFIELD

News Depot.

EARLY DELIVERY.

SATISFACTION GUARANTEED.

A Full Line of the Best Brands of Imported and Domestic

CIGARS,

from Acker, Merrill & Condit,

D. Osborne & Co., Wilkinson,

Gaddis & Co.

GARLOCK & MISHILL

Newsdealers,

276 Glenwood Avenue

Opp. D. L. & W. Station.

Our Store will be Open on Friday Evenings and Close at Noon Saturdays until the first of September.

THE TWELVE-ACRE STORE.

HAHNE & CO.

Broad, New and Halsey Streets, Newark.

Our Store will be Open on Friday Evenings and Close at Noon Saturdays until the first of September.

Our July Furniture Sale.

BONA FIDE Reductions throughout the Two Acres of Parlor and Chamber Suits, Library, Dining-Room, Porch and Lawn Pieces, and everything else in High, Medium and Ordinary Grades.

The display is the most invitingly attractive of all the stores—we make no exception whatever. The articles were bought of the same manufacturers, and are the same grades as those sold in New York, but price distinction makes it profitable to buy here. Variety and choice are just as big. Other New Jersey exhibits and reductions cannot be considered, for they do not meet ours in any particular. This sale is a sensation with its high character and low prices. Our furniture was not put together to sell and then go to pieces. Every article in our two acres is splendidly made and sells at a great cut-bargain price—the price which we make twice a year. Everyone will remember the rich harvest gleaned at our last Semi-Annual Furniture Sale. Note a few sample prices:

PARLOR SUITS.

Every Parlor Suit has been run through the bargain hopper and reduced. Our Parlor Suit display is famous for its vastness and beauty. We put this price as an example of our deep cut on handsome best-made Parlor Suits: A 5-piece Parlor Suit, new frame design, fine mahogany finish, choice of covering in damask, tapestry and Verona velour, back of sofa and four chairs richly tufted, front of all seats pleated and corded; sofa, two arm-chairs, one side and one reception chair to the suit. Regular price \$55. Sale price

\$39.50

Well-Made Couches.

Value 13.50, now 12.00

Value 7.50, now 6.50

Value 6.98, now 6.00

Value 16.00, now 14.50

Value 20.00, now 18.00

Chiffoniers.

Regular 6.50, now 5.85

Regular 8.00, now 7.25

Regular 9.75, now 8.75

Regular 11.00, now 10.00

Regular 20.00, now 18.00

Regular 23.50, now 21.00

Regular 27.00, now 24.25

Chairs and Rockers.

Chairs and Rockers of every

make and kind, suitable for indoor or

outdoor use, in oak, mahogany, white

enamel, reed, rattan, cane, hickory.

Prices upward from 57c.

Bedding of every description is

included in this sale—Hair Mattresses,

Cotton Mattresses, Bolsters, Hair

and Feather Pillows, Feathers, Springs, Canvas

Upholstered and Wire Cots and

Divans.

Iron Beds.

Regular 3.00, reduced to 2.70

Regular 5.75, reduced to 5.25

Regular 6.50, reduced to 5.85

Regular 9.00, reduced to 8.00

Regular 10.25, reduced to 9.25

Bookcases.

Reg. price 9.75, to go at 8.75

Reg. price 10.50, to go at 9.50

Reg. price 13.25, to go at 12.00

Reg. price 19.75, to go at 17.75

Reg. price 23.00, to go at 21.00

Reg. price 27.00, to go at 24.50

Reg. price 35.00, to go at 31.50

Folding Couches.

Bronzed Iron Frame Folding Couches:

Regular 8.50, down to 7.50

Regular 10.00, down to 9.00

Regular 12.00, down to 10.50

Regular 16.00, down to 14.00

OUR BEAUTIFUL STORE is more beautiful than ever with its wealth of summer freshness in merchandise and appointments, its broad, breeze-swept aisles, and superb decorations. It is the coolest store, with more cool, refreshing influences than any other in the East. No New York store compares with it for elegance, convenience and variety of choice in home and personal supplies.

Hahne & Co.'s 12-Acre Store, Newark.

NOTICE OF SETTLEMENT.

Notice is hereby given that the accounts of

the subscriber, the Administrator of the Estate

of Stephen C. Van Rensselaer, deceased, will be

audited and stated by the Surrogate and re-

ported for settlement to the Orphans' Court of

the County of Essex, on Saturday, the ninth

day of July next.

Dated June 4, 1904.

COURTLANDT S. VAN RENSSALAER,

ARTHUR SMITH, PROCTOR.

NOTICE OF SETTLEMENT.

Notice is hereby given that the accounts of

the subscriber, the Executor of the last will

and testament of Sophie Popper, deceased, will be

audited and stated by the Surrogate and re-

ported for settlement to the Orphans' Court of

the County of Essex, on Saturday, the ninth

day of July next.

Dated June 8, 1904.

HARVEY SCHLESINGER.

L. DAWKINS,

Cor. Montgomery and Orchard Streets

DEALER IN

FINE GROCERIES, PRO-

VISIONS, FRUITS,

Miss Cornelia D. Milner,

DEALER IN

Pianos and Organs,

Bloomfield, New Jersey.

Pianos shipped direct from factory. Low-

est prices and easiest terms.

Resident Agent for the Oldest Piano House

in New York City. Old Instruments taken in

exchange, rented and sold on time payments.

259 Walnut St., Bloomfield, N. J.

(Circuit A-254.)

SHERIFF'S SALE—Essex County Common

Pleas Court, John P. Dexheimer vs. Eliza-

beth Hetzel Pl. fa.

By virtue of the above stated writ of fieri

facias, to me directed, I shall expose for sale

by public vendue, at the Court House in New-

ark, on Tuesday, the second day of August

next, at two o'clock P. M., all those tracts or

parcels of land and premises situate, lying

and being in the town of Bloomfield, Essex

county, New Jersey:

First Tract—Beginning on the division line